(b) Kendriya Vidyalayas have become an effective and vibrant tool for national integration, because of a common scheme of studies, uniform academic calendar, common medium of instructions and common ideals. Students from different States study together in Kendriya Vidyalayas. Events of national importance are also celebrated in Kendriya Vidyalayas on regular basis for promoting solidarity amongst students.

(c) and (d) Opening of new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) is continuous process. They are opened from time to time following established norms and procedures while ensuring that there is no decline in educational standards irrespective of expansion.

(e) During the year 2005-06, two Kendriya Vidyalayas were opened in lieu of non functional/closed schools.

Drop-Out Rates

3039. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any study about the rate of drop-outs in various States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Holenarsipur and Arkalgud in Hassan District of Karnataka tops in school drop-outs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Central Government to check increasing drop-outs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) Government has not conducted any independent study to identify the drop-out rates. Based on the information furnished by the State Governments, the data relating to drop-out rates from class 1—10 have been compiled for the year 2003-04. District-wise drop-out rates is not maintained in the Ministry

(e) A multi-pronged approach has been adopted under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for reducing drop-out rates. One set of interventions relates to strengthening of primary and upper primary schools and improving the quality of education through improvement in school infrastructure, recruitment of additional teachers, regular training of teachers, etc. There

are also special interventions for enrolment and retention of vulnerable groups of children. The Mid-Day Meals Scheme that provides a cooked meal to all children of primary schools and alternative education centers has also helped in checking dropouts.

Absence of Teachers in Primary Schools

3040. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a recent World Bank-Harvard University study reporting that in India, one in four Government primary school teachers are absent on any given day, and that only one in two are actually teaching;

(b) whether it is a fact that in this study of 20 States, India has the second highest average absence rate among the eight countries;

(c) if so, whether Government have planned or implemented any steps to improve teacher attendance in Government primary schools across India;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The Government is aware of a study by the World Bank and Harvard University covering 3700 schools in 20 States, conducted in the year 2004 and its findings reported that 25% of teachers in Government primary schools are absent on a typical day and of the teachers who were present, 59.5% were found to be teaching in class.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) Emphasis has been given on the role of Village Education Committees or local bodies in monitoring and supervision of schools including attendance of teachers.